

REMARKS

This Response is offered in reply to the office action of July 31, 2006. A petition and fee for a one (1) month time extension are enclosed.

In paragraph 3 of the office action, claims 24, 26, and 27 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious in view of US patent 5,961,126 taken with US Patent 5 427,389.

Applicants disagree with this rejection. In particular, pending independent claim 24 is directed to a cylinder head gasket having a first bead surrounding each respective combustion chamber opening for sealing around the opening and a second meandering bead; namely, a so-called stopper bead, for delimiting the elastic deformation of the associated first bead, wherein the second meandering bead is disposed between the first bead and the combustion chamber opening and close to the first bead in order to fulfill its stopper function.

Applicants believe that the '126 patent fails to disclose or suggest such a cylinder head gasket. In particular, Applicants' believe that the examiner has misinterpreted Fig. 3 of the '126 patent. In particular, the examiner should note that Fig. 2 of the '126 patent is a sectional view taken along line 2-2 in Fig. 1 such that the combustion chamber opening H_c is located on the left side of Fig. 1. Fig. 3 is a sectional view taken along line 3-3 in Fig. 1 such that the combustion chamber opening H_c is located at the left side of Fig. 1.

Applicants would like to invite the examiner's attention to the text from line 16 of col. 3 to line 10 of col. 4 of the '126 patent.

Applicants would point out to the examiner that the bead A16 referred to by the Examiner as a first bead is, like bead A15 shown in Fig. 1, a peripheral bead extending along the periphery of the gasket.

As should be clear to the examiner, the gasket of the '126 patent does not have at least one first bead for each of the combustion chamber openings H_c . Rather, in the '126 patent, the entire group of all combustion chamber openings is surrounded by the single peripheral bead A15 and the single peripheral bead A16.

The examiner also should note that in the '126 patent, the equivalent of the first bead of Applicants' pending claims is the bead A12a (not shown in Fig. 1 but shown in Fig. 2 of the patent). That is, for each of the combustion chamber openings H_c , the gasket of the '126 patent provides a bead A12a surrounding the respective combustion chamber opening.

However, the gasket of the '126 patent does not provide stoppers for the combustion chamber opening beads A12a, and the peripheral beads A15 and A16 are unable to protect the first combustion chamber opening beads A12a against excessive flattening because the peripheral beads A15, A16 do not surround each single one of the combustion chamber openings. Moreover, the peripheral beads A15, A16 are not disposed close enough to the first beads A12a along the circumference of each of the first beads to provide a stopper function.

Therefore, the cited primary '126 patent is grossly deficient with respect to Applicants' pending claims and of course is likewise grossly deficient as a main reference to be combined with the secondary '389 patent.

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With respect to the '389 patent, Figures 5 and 6 show meandering beads 42b and 52b, respectively. However, those meandering beads are not stopper beads because they are disposed remote from the combustion chamber opening beads 12a, which are shown in Fig. 2 of the '389 patent. The meandering beads 42a, 52a also do not surround any one of the combustion chamber openings Hc.

Rather, the beads 42b, 52b and also beads 12b, 22b shown in the drawings of the '389 patent extend only along one of the short edges of the gasket plate and serve the purpose of supporting part of the tightening pressure applied by the cylinder head screws extending through the screw holes Hb1 disposed close to the beads.

The examiner will now appreciate that both the primary '126 patent and the secondary '389 patent are grossly deficient with respect to the subject matter of Applicants' pending claims. Moreover, even if the primary and secondary patents are combined, such a combination would not result in a gasket as recited in pending claims 24, 26, and 27.

Applicants believe the Section 103(a) rejection of claims 24, 26, and 27 is in error and request reconsideration thereof.

Applicants enclose herewith a Supplemental IDS listing US Patent 6 036 195, which Applicants ask the Examiner to consider and make of record herein.

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Allowance of pending claims 24, 26, and 27 is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Enclosures: Supplemental IDS and post card

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service under 37 CFR 1.8 as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner For Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on November 28, 2006.



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